GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:114
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2004
NATIONAL MATERNITY BENEFIT SCHEME
Reddy Shri Karunakara G.

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government provides any antenatal or postnatal financial assistance to the women living below poverty line in urban and rural areas under the National Maternity Benefit Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government has set any criteria to ensure that this amount reaches the needy women;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any arrangement has been made to give wide publicity to this in order to generate awareness in the remote villages about the Scheme;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the extent to which the needy women are benefited from this financial assistance?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)to(g): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 114 FOR 8TH DECEMBER, 2004

(a) & (b) Under the National Maternity Benefit Scheme, financial assistance at the rate of Rs. 500/- per pregnancy for the first two live births is provided to women belonging to a household below poverty line, who have attained 19 years of age or above. The scheme is linked to maternal and child care and provision of better diet to pregnant women.

(c) & (d) The State Governments/UT administrations and District Authorities have been advised that the benefits under the Scheme should preferably be paid in the bank accounts of the beneficiaries in the post office savings bank or in commercial bank or through Postal Money Order. Under NMBS, cash disbursement is also permitted provided the payment is made in public meeting, preferably of gram sabha in a village and/or in the neighbourhood/Mohalla Committee.

(e)&(f): To make people aware of the provisions of the scheme, the District Level Committees under the chairmanship of District Collectors have been directed to give wide publicity to the scheme and its procedures. To facilitate the process, 4% of the grant sanctioned to the Districts is allowed for use as administrative expenses on activities such as giving publicity to the scheme.

(g) Assistance under this scheme is expected to provide nutritional supplementation to the poor women during their period of pregnancy.

It is estimated that since 2001-02, when the scheme was transferred to this department, approximately 31 lakhs women have been provided assistance under the scheme.